



ACTS

Of All the Apostles

You Will Be My Witnesses:

Running the Race

Lesson 45



Festus and Agrippa

Acts 25:1-26:32

Supplemental Scripture

Hebrews 12:1-3
Romans 10:13-15
Acts 9:15

Memory Verse

How beautiful on the mountains are the feet of those who bring good news, who proclaim peace, who bring good tidings, who proclaim salvation, who say to Zion, "Your God reigns!"
Isaiah 52:7 (NIV)

Lesson Goals

Understand that Paul waited in a Caesarean jail two years

Understand that Festus favored the Jews

Understand that Paul shared about Jesus before King Agrippa

Understand that God was sending Paul to Rome

NOTE: Familiarize yourself with this story. Study the supplemental Scripture and make notes on, but do NOT read from, these pages. To reinforce that these ideas are not your own, hold your Bible as you tell the story.

Do you notice shoes? There are many kinds of shoes - shoes for construction work, shoes for running, shoes for fun, etc. Do you ever look at people's feet? They are all different. Some feet are long and thin, others are short and wide. Some people keep their feet covered; others like to be barefooted as much as possible. Have you ever wondered what Paul's feet looked like? Let's see what we can find out!

We last learned that two years passed as Paul waited in a jail in Caesarea. Governor Felix cared more about doing the Jews a favor than being just. Felix's term as governor ended and a man named Festus took his place. Three days after Festus took his place as governor, he headed to Jerusalem. While there, the Jews told Festus what they had against Paul and tried to get Festus to move Paul to Jerusalem. They still wanted Paul dead and planned to ambush him on the way, but Governor Festus preferred to take care of things in Caesarea.

After spending a little over a week in Jerusalem, Festus returned to Caesarea. He promptly called the court together to hear from Paul himself. After the Jews said many things they couldn't prove, Paul spoke up. "He said, 'I've done nothing wrong against the law of the Jews or against the temple. I've done nothing wrong against Cesar.'" (Acts 25:8 NIV)

Unfortunately, Festus was a lot like Felix. Rather than render justice, he preferred to do the Jews a favor! He offered to send Paul to Jerusalem, but Paul argued that he was already being tried in one of Caesar's courts. Paul had done nothing wrong and Festus knew it. Paul made it clear, "If I am guilty of anything worthy of death, I'm willing to die. But the charges brought against me by these Jews are not true. No one has the right to hand me over to them." (Acts 25:11 NIV) Then Paul asked to be tried by the Emperor himself. Festus discussed it with the other members of his court and agreed to send Paul to Rome, where he would appear before Caesar.

Festus needed to send a letter along with Paul, but couldn't decide what he should write. A timely visit helped him. King Agrippa and his wife, Bernice, came to Caesarea to visit Festus. Once Festus explained Paul's case, King Agrippa wanted to hear Paul for himself. God had told Paul from the beginning that he would speak before kings (Acts 9:15), now he would get his chance.

Application

At the beginning of the lesson today, I asked if you noticed shoes or feet. I also asked if you have ever wondered what Paul's feet looked like? The Bible certainly doesn't tell us if Paul's feet were big or small, or even if they were hairy. What the Bible does say is that feet are beautiful when they are running to tell the Good News of Jesus Christ to others. (Isaiah 52:7)

Are your feet beautiful? Do you tell others about Jesus? If not, what's stopping you? People are waiting to hear the news that you have! You may be surprised at how ready some people are to hear what you have to say.

Maybe you don't yet have anything to share. Has anyone ever shared with you about Jesus? He loved you enough to die for all the bad stuff you have ever done. Will you choose to follow Him today?

Paul spoke and addressed the king, "I am happy to be able to stand here today. . . I am very pleased that you are familiar with Jewish ways. You know the kinds of things they argue about. So I beg you to be patient as you listen to me." (Acts 26:2-3 NIV) "Today I am on trial because of the hope I have. I believe in what God promised our people long ago." (Acts 26:6 NIV) "King Agrippa," he said, "why would anyone doubt that God can raise people from the dead? That is what the Jews have against me."

Then, Paul shared his testimony with King Agrippa. "I used to be just like them," Paul said. "I even had the followers of Jesus arrested and sent to their death. I went to other cities to punish them. On one of those trips, King Agrippa, a bright light blinded me and Jesus spoke to me. He asked me why I was persecuting Him. I was changed that day. Jesus told me that I would tell others about Him. He also said, 'I want you to turn them from darkness to light. I want you to turn them from Satan's power to God. I want their sins to be forgiven. They will be forgiven when they believe in Me.'" (Acts 26:18 NIV)

Paul told King Agrippa that he had obeyed the Lord. He had preached in Damascus, in Jerusalem, and all over Asia Minor. He had preached to Jews and non-Jews. He said, "I told them to turn away from their sins to God. The way they live must prove that they have turned away from their sins. That's why the Jews grabbed me in the temple courtyard and tried to kill me." (Acts 26:20b-21 NIV) In reality, Paul said nothing any different than the prophets in the Old Testament - Scriptures the Jews knew very well.

Festus interrupted Paul and called him crazy, but Paul appealed to King Agrippa, "do you believe the prophets? I know you do." (Acts 26:27 NIV) "Then Agrippa spoke to Paul. 'Are you trying to talk me into becoming a Christian?' he said. 'Do you think you can do that in such a short time?'" (Acts 26:28) "Short or long," Paul said, "my prayer is that you could be like me, except, of course, for these chains."

Rather than respond to the message they had just heard, the king and his wife, the governor, and all who were with them stood up and left the room. And rather than discuss their guilt as sinners, they discussed Paul's innocence in this case. The king even told Festus, "This man could have been set free. But he has made an appeal to Caesar." (Acts 26:32 NIV) Paul would now go to Rome . . . in chains!

Next Week
Shipwreck
Acts 27:1-28:10

Preschool Lesson

We last learned that two years passed as Paul waited in a jail in Caesarea. A new governor, named Festus, came to Caesarea. He called the court together to hear from Paul. The Jews said many things they couldn't prove, then Paul spoke up. "He said, 'I've done nothing wrong against the law of the Jews or against the temple. I've done nothing wrong against Caesar.'" (Acts 25:8 NIV)

All of that was true, but Festus didn't really want to make a decision. He wanted to do the Jews a favor! He offered to send Paul to Jerusalem, but Paul said no. Paul had already been tried once in this court and was now being tried again. The charges against him were all lies and the Jews had no right to take him to Jerusalem. And, because Paul was a Roman citizen, he asked to go to Rome. He wanted the emperor himself to listen to his case!

While Governor Festus was trying to decide what to write in a letter to the emperor, King Agrippa and his wife, Bernice, came to Caesarea for a visit. Festus told King Agrippa about Paul's case. The King decided that he wanted to hear Paul for himself. This completed what God had told Paul from the beginning. Paul would speak to kings about God! (Acts 9:15)

Paul spoke to the king. He shared his testimony with King Agrippa. "I used to be just like these Jews," Paul said. "I had the followers of Jesus arrested and hurt. I went to other cities to punish them. On one of those trips, King Agrippa, a bright light blinded me and Jesus spoke to me. He asked me why I was persecuting Him. I was changed that day. Jesus told me that I would tell others about Him and that some of them would be changed, too.

Paul told King Agrippa that he had obeyed the Lord. He had preached in Damascus, in Jerusalem, and all over Asia Minor. He had preached to Jews and non-Jews. He said, "I told them to turn away from their sins to God. The way they live must prove that they have turned away from their sins. That's why the Jews grabbed me in the temple courtyard and tried to kill me." (Acts 26:20b-21 NIV)

Festus interrupted Paul and called him crazy. King Agrippa was listening, though. But instead of responding to Paul's message from God, King Agrippa left the room. The king's wife, the governor, and all who were with them stood up and left the room, too.

Activities

Memory Verse Activity - Trace or paint footprints on to construction paper. Add the memory verse.

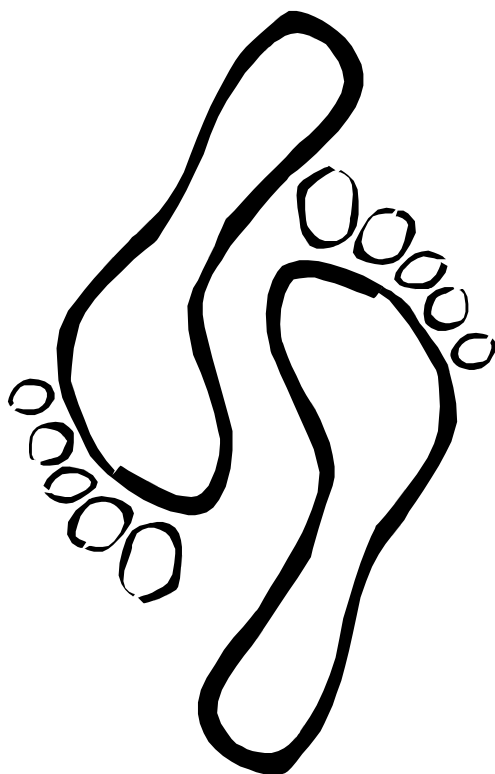
Sing “How Beautiful,” and “Our God Reigns.”

Have your students practice sharing their testimonies. Be sensitive to those who don’t yet have a testimony. Be ready to pull them aside and share the plan of salvation.

Make a pouch from two footprints. Fill the pouch with “Feet Verses.” Use some of the following verses: 1 Samuel 2:9, 2 Samuel 22:34 (Psalm 18:33, Habakkuk 3:19), Job 29:15, Psalm 40:2, Psalm 56:13, Psalm 119:59, Psalm 119:101, Psalm 119:105, Proverbs 4:26, Jeremiah 13:16, Luke 8:35, Luke 10:39, Luke 15:22-24, Luke 24:36-40, John 12:3, John 13:3-16, Ephesians 6:15 (or verses 10-18).

If your class is made up of girls, give each other pedicures and discuss some of the “feet verses.”

As you continue memorizing Hebrews 12:1-3, talk about what our “beautiful feet” should be doing. How do we keep them “on track?”



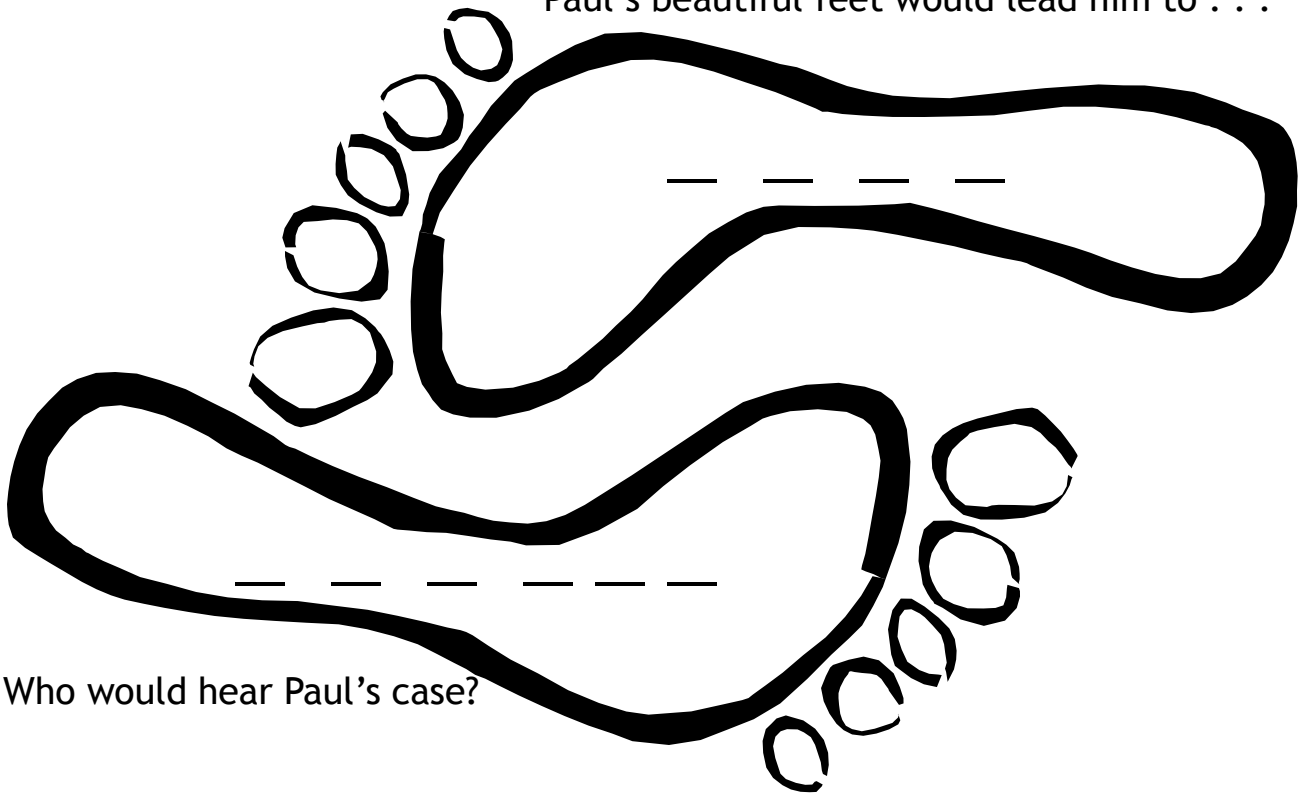
How beautiful on the mountains
are the feet of those
who bring good news,
who proclaim peace,
who bring good tidings,
who proclaim salvation,
who say to Zion, "Your God reigns!"

Isaiah 52:7

Racing Riddles



Paul's beautiful feet would lead him to . . .

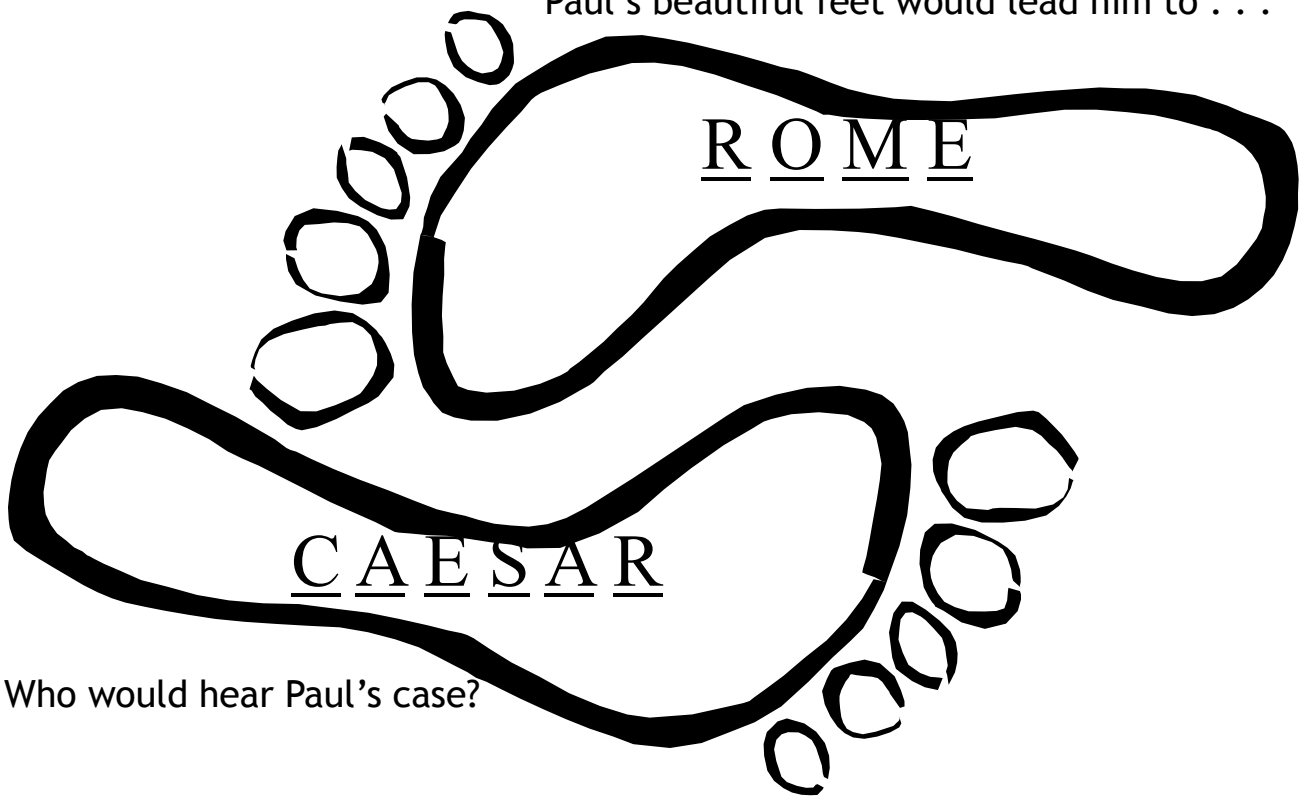


Who would hear Paul's case?

Racing Riddles



Paul's beautiful feet would lead him to . . .



Who would hear Paul's case?

Word Search

o e s s r a h p r i p h g i h
r r t a n s t o k i l l o x r
t s o i t e s t i n y a i i a
h o r m r a a d n n l e w l s
s u t s e f p l o u r t c e e
d a u l t m p m a u l e e f a
u h y c a r i p s n o c t r c
a t u y o t r l r r o i o o p
l a s i s s g m b l s n n n s
c w w e j u a t n u d r j r e
t r t u f e g t h a p e r e r
e i s a r h n g h p w b i v h
t x i l s f i o n s e e t o t
e i e c c p k f i l h t g g i
u n t r u l s n r r e s a e c

Festus

King Agrippa

Bernice

Jews

Paul

conspiracy

testimony

Caesar

Rome

Word Search

o e s s r a h p r i p h g i h
r r t a n s t o k i l l o x r
t s o i t e s t i n y a i i a
h o r m r a a d n n l e w l s
s u t s e f p l o u r t c e e
d a u l t m p m a u l e e f a
u h y c a r i p s n o c t r c
a t u y o t r l r r o i o o p
l a s i s s g m b l s n n n s
c w w e j u a t n u d r j r e
t r t u f e g t h a p e r e r
e i s a r h n g h p w b i v h
t x i l s f i o n s e e t o t
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u n t r u l s n r r e s a e c

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